



Natural Resources Conservation Service
One Credit Union Place, Suite 340
Harrisburg, PA 1700-2993

January 28, 2010

GENERAL MANUAL
PA 130 – AGN
Part 400, Supplement No. 1 (Part 400.14 CPTAD)

SUBJECT: AGN – Delegations of Authority for NEPA compliance at the Field and State Office Level

Purpose. To supplement the General Manual's Title 130 Agency General policy part 400.14 CPTAD Delegations of Authority for Conservation Planning and Technical Assistance by designating agency representatives as having authority to perform Field and State level duties of the Responsible Federal Official for NEPA compliance.

Effective Date. This Supplement is effective when received.

Background. The State Conservationist is the Responsible Federal Official and may delegate that authority to a designated agency representative.

Filing instructions. This Supplement should be filed immediately following Title 130, Part 400 Subpart B, Section 400.14 CPTAD.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. C. Brown", is written over a horizontal line.

DAVID C. BROWN
Acting State Conservationist

DIST: GM Holders



**Title 130 – Agency General
PART 400 – Mission Statement
Subpart B – Delegations of Authority**

CONTENTS

**PART 400.14 – Delegations of Authority for NEPA Compliance at the Field and State
Office Levels
PA Supplement No. 4**

This supplement provides the delegations of authority for NEPA compliance to designated agency representatives at the field and state office levels.

The State Conservationist is the Responsible Federal Official for NEPA compliance and may delegate that authority to a designated agency representative.

The District Conservationist assigned to each field office in Pennsylvania is designated as the agency Responsible Federal Official for NEPA compliance (also referred to as the designated conservationist for NEPA compliance) and is delegated the authority to determine the context of an action, whether there are significant adverse environmental effects or extraordinary circumstances that would preclude the applicability of a categorical exclusion or the tiering process, to make NEPA compliance findings, and sign block R of the NRCS CPA-52 form.

With concurrence from the State Conservationist, the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations may designate, at the field office level, another NRCS employee in place of the District Conservationist. Any such change in designated conservationists for NEPA compliance will be reported to the State Environmental Liaison and Resource Conservationist for Planning.

NRCS or partner employees who have received appropriate training and have demonstrated ability to evaluate short and long term effects of an action or alternative actions are delegated the authority to sign block M indicating they have used the best available information in completing blocks A – L of the evaluation worksheet. Appropriate training may include the Environmental Evaluation training modules 1 - 5 available online at Aglearn or equivalent as approved by the State Resource Conservationist. Following training, demonstrated ability will be achieved through supervisor recommendation and the completion of a successful Environmental Evaluation Worksheet review by the Resource Conservationist for planning. All NRCS or partner certified conservation planners who maintain their certifications to current requirements have received training and demonstrated their ability to complete blocks A – M of the environmental evaluation worksheet.

Individuals listed in the Technical Service Providers registry meeting the requirements of a technical service category that requires an environmental evaluation such as Conservation Activity Plans may also sign block M since they have demonstrated similar proficiency requirements for evaluating short and long term effects of an action.

In Pennsylvania, the designated agency representatives at the State Office level for NEPA compliance are the Environmental Planning Specialist on the Conservation Engineering staff and the Resource Conservationist for Planning on the Ecological Sciences and Planning Staff.

The Environmental Planning Specialist is designated as the State Environmental Liaison and is delegated the authority to determine if further NEPA analysis is needed. The State Environmental Liaison is responsible for providing overall guidance and support regarding all special environmental concerns, the determination of significance or extraordinary circumstances, and compliance with applicable Federal laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and policy as well as applicable State and local requirements.

The Resource Conservationist for Planning is responsible for providing guidance and support to conservation planners involved in the part of the planning process related to evaluating the short and long term effects of an action or alternative actions on people, their physical surroundings, and nature.

Other State Office Staff are currently responsible for providing guidance and support for each of the special environmental concerns addressed in the NEPA Environmental Evaluation Worksheet as follows:

State Soil Scientist	Prime and Unique Farmlands
Environmental Planning Specialist	Clean Air Act Coastal Zone Management Coral Reefs Cultural Resources Environmental Justice Essential Fish Habitat Floodplain Management Natural Areas Scenic Beauty Sole Source Aquifer Wild & Scenic Rivers
State Biologist	Clean Water Act Endangered and Threatened Species Invasive Species Migratory Birds/Bald & Golden Eagles Riparian Area Wetlands

Employees filling the above positions that provide guidance and support for many of the above listed special environmental concerns are identified in the Pennsylvania Who 'Ya Gonna Call reference. These responsibilities may be delegated to other positions by the State Conservationist as needed.